

"THOU, LORD, SEEST ME"

The Biography of Henry Woodrow Grigsby

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1	Installation	1
Chapter 2	Black Mission pre-Civil War	3
Chapter 3	Black Missions post-Civil War	6
Chapter 4	Synodical Conference Missions	9
Chapter 5	Growing Up in Alabama	14
Chapter 6	Growing in the Word	19
Chapter 7	Beginning the Ministry	21
Chapter 8	A Man on the Go	24
Chapter 9	Marriage	27
Chapter 10	Storm Clouds	29
Chapter 11	Looking for a Place to Call Home	33
Chapter 12	A Short-Lived Mission with Long-Range Consequences	36
Chapter 13	Daughters!	38
Chapter 14	Out of the Dust	42
Chapter 15	Back in the Saddle Again	44
Chapter 16	"You're Not Quite Done Yet!"	46
Chapter 17	Conclusions	48
Sources		50

Chapter 1 Installation

It was March 6, 1977. The location: Milwaukee, WI. During the afternoon of this late winter day, the Lutheran Chorale was performing one of their always popular concerts at Mt. Lebanon. But across town, the large church building at the corner of 21st and Nash was quickly filling. About 600 people filled the church almost to capacity. Included in that group of 600 were about 30 pastors (and their wives) from around the Milwaukee area.

The service began. Both the Senior Choir and the Children's Choir sang selections. The children in grades 1-3 of the Christian Day School also raised their voices in praise. Pastor Norman Berg, at that time Executive Secretary for the General Board for Home Missions, mounted the pulpit to address the gathering. His text was Rev 3:20: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." The service continued with the new pastor of the congregation being installed by his brothers in the ministry. After the service, the new pastor and his wife greeted the members and guests, then proceeded to the basement for a meal prepared by the ladies of the congregation.

A typical installation service at a typical WELS congregation? Yes. And no. The congregation receiving the new pastor that day was Siloah Lutheran Church. And the man who was installed that day is Pastor Henry Grigsby. Nothing atypical so far.

But there were some very interesting points to consider at this installation. First of all, the pastor who was being installed wasn't a young man going to his first call. In fact, it was a man who earlier that same year, at the age of 71, had announced his retirement from the ministry. But instead of going somewhere to simply relax and enjoy retirement, he had been called back into the ministry.

The second interesting point is that Pastor Grigsby isn't blond and blue-eyed. Instead, he is an African-American. The only reason that his color would be significant is the fact that the Rev. Henry Woodrow Grigsby was the first African -American whom

the Lord called into full-time pastoral ministry in the WELS.

Who is this man? What is his background? How did he come to be a pastor, and later a WELS member? What is the significance of Pastor Grigsby for the WELS?

We will attempt to answer these questions and others in this paper. In order for us to understand the trail which brought Pastor Grigsby to the WELS, we need to first examine the Lutheran missions to the South. To that we now proceed.

Chapter 2 Black Missions - Pre-Civil War

Black Lutheranism in America had its beginnings in the North. Black involvement with the Lutheran Church on a continuing basis seems to have begun around 1700 in the Dutch Lutheran Church. Justus Falckner was the pastor, and there were two free Negroes among his membership - Aree van Guinea and his wife Jora. Later van Guinea moved to New Jersey, to the Raritan Valley, where he is said to have donated the land for the first Lutheran Church building in the valley (Johnson, 30). Later Aree also served on the Church Council.

A man named Tom was one of the first slaves to enter the Lutheran Church. This took place in New York City about 1710. The owner of Tom was not enthralled with the idea of Tom joining the church. His fear was that Tom would no longer wish to be his slave, and that he would therefore lose his "property" when Tom became a Christian. Tom's statement concerning this question is striking. "The Indian (Tom)...settled the question by stating that he was willing to remain in servitude in this world, provided he was assured that he would be free and equal in the skies beyond" (Johnson, 30).

Things became more complicated as slavery took greater hold of the U.S. The problem was that the people didn't mind sharing the Gospel with the slaves, but they would not allow the slaves to participate fully in the church itself. After all, a slave couldn't be on one level with his master on the farm, and at another level in the church. And yet how did that square with Christianity, where there is "neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free?" (Gal 3:28)

In 1817 the North Carolina Synod adopted a 5-point evangelism program for blacks. Point one said that Negroes, both slave and free, should be ready to be fully accepted to the church in line with their situation in society. It didn't detail whether that meant full acceptance to the existing local congregation, or to new congregations formed to serve the blacks.

Points two and three dealt with practices concerning the Lord's Supper. Point Two required black communicants to demonstrate, by their conduct, a desire to live a holy life. This was a stipulation not imposed on the white members. Point three added a probationary period before slaves could be communed (and then only at the same church at which their masters belonged).

Point four dealt with baptism. It placed the obligation for having infants baptized on the parents of the child, and also for the first time allowed blacks to serve as sponsors at the baptisms.

Point five was one which gave lots of problems. It dealt with the marriage of slaves, always a sticky situation. The problem is that the Bible teaches that marriage is to a union of one man and one woman, for life. The slave owners, on the other hand, "wanted to maintain their right to sell individual slaves as they saw fit" (107-8). How did the North Carolina Synod solve this problem? They basically required the slave to be faithful to his/her spouse as long as they weren't separated by the master. If one of them were sold, neither could enter a second marriage without the the consent of the minister, master, or mistress. In other words, the church was sanctioning divorce in sort of a back handed way, by giving authority over the marriage to someone other than God and the couple itself.

In spite of all the weaknesses, the North Carolina Synod was able to bring a number of blacks into the church. Generally there were places reserved in the church building for the black members. Pastors were also supposed to reserve a part of the sermon for them.

Other southern synods followed the lead of the North Carolina Synod. By the time of the Civil War, the South Carolina Synod reported 954 Black member, a touch under 20% of the total membership. The Synod of Georgia reported 54 black members. (Dickinson, 21) Record keeping in the North Carolina and Tennessee Synods left

much to be desired. Johnson feels it is reasonable to assume that there were somewhere between 1000 and 1500 black members by the time of the Civil War. (113) Finally, the Mississippi Synod reported 53 colored communicant, approximately 16% of its total. (Johnson, 126)

At this point the number of blacks in the southern Lutheran church bodies was a significant portion of the total membership. There were three black men ordained into the ministry. The first black man to attend a Lutheran seminary entered Gettysburg in 1835. There was even a black man sent abroad as a foreign missionary in 1845.¹ It appeared that Lutheranism was going to become an important part of the black community, and vice-versa. But then came the Civil War.

¹ The man's name was Boston J. Drayton. He had served in a leadership position with St. John's Lutheran Church in Charleston, one of the churches most active in outreach to the black community. He was sent by that church as a missionary to Africa, to the colony of Maryland, located southeast of Liberia.

Chapter 3 Black Missions - Post-Civil War

The Civil War disrupted the work that was happening in the Lutheran Church, as it disrupted almost everything else in our country. Unfortunately, it proved to have an almost devastating effect on much of what had been accomplished in the years before the Civil War. It also showed that many of the methods which had been employed were not really working as well as it seemed.

Dickinson reports the membership of the South Carolina Synod in 1862 to number 4,120 white members and 954 black members. In 1868 the figures read 3,289 and 144 respectively. That represents a decline in white communicant membership of approximately 20%. But it reflects a drop in black confirmed membership of a whopping 85%! How could this happen?

Dickinson advances a number of possible explanations. He writes:

Many reasons have been advanced for the mass exodus of Blacks from the Lutheran churches of their former masters and the apparent disregard of the Lutheran churches for a soul conservation program to retain, or regain, their fallen Black members. One Southern Lutheran writer said 'One reason was the disorganized condition of the Southern Lutheran Church after the war. Another was the paucity of her ministers and the poverty of her members. A third, he states, was the urgent need for looking after and caring for her white members, who were relatively in the majority and were widely dispersed. These groups of scattered sheep demanded her pastoral care and they were wanting the men and the means to raise up suddenly a colored ministry for the colored people.'

Another writer says, 'The poverty of the white people make it scarcely possible at this time to support churches for themselves, and all missionary work was relatively suspended; and this was at the very time when the Negroes temptation was greatest to break away from all religious restraints and indulge in sinful excesses.' Dr. Christopher Drewes writes, 'They fell prey to noisy revivalists.'

With the clear perspective of hindsight gained over a period of one hundred years, it is abundantly clear that the South was embarking upon a program to establish a social caste system within the country based on color, one Black and the other white; separate and unequal. The church, regardless of her theologies, was in the vanguard in the establishment of the social caste system for the country. Rationalizing that the spiritual life

of the slaves was the responsibility of the master during slavery and had only become the responsibility of the church-at-large after freedom, the church could say, evidently with no perils of conscience, that she was not prepared to assume this new and unprecedented responsibility.

Although the Lutheran Church may soothe its conscience by saying that the Black members forsook their fellowship, it is equally true that the Lutheran Church forsook its obligation to support its Black members in this time of crisis. It is hard for Lutherans, who boast that their church is as broad and as narrow as the Bible, or that, 'When Scripture has spoken, the case is decided,' to admit that their beloved church was implicated in stretching the truth, or winking at Scriptural transgressions. But when the mandates of God's Holy Word were in conflict, or even constant tension, with the mandates of the racial caste system in the country, racism inevitably won the victory. (21-22)

Johnson also discusses possible reasons for the precipitous decline. First, he points out that joining a Lutheran Church is quite different from joining a Methodist or Baptist Church. In the Lutheran Church there is tremendous stress on thorough training and indoctrination. Because of that it often takes several generations before a family is thoroughly Lutheran. The Baptist or Methodist Churches, on the other hand, accept people as members after little or no instruction, and so the person is very quickly an accepted part of that body. Much of the serious mission outreach to the blacks had been done in the fifteen years prior to the Civil War, and so those people had not been involved in the Lutheran Church for long enough to become thoroughly Lutheran.

Secondly, Johnson points out, many of the people didn't "leave" the church. In reality they were put out of the church as churches rewrote their constitutions to exclude blacks.

Thirdly, closely connected to the previous point, Johnson points out that when the black members were "invited to leave" their church and join one which would be "more beneficial for them," there was no place, no other Lutheran congregation, to which they could go. If they wanted to remain in a Christian congregation, they often were forced to look to the Baptists, or to the Methodists. In addition, those two groups had the

advantage that they had worked seriously in the black community since the middle of the 18th century, much longer than the Lutheran Church had done its work. (147-8)

Another important fact to remember is that everything in the South was different after the Civil War, and no one was quite sure how to react. For example, at the meeting of the South Carolina Synod in 1866, President Boineist "candidly admitted that many of the pastors just did not know what to do and were waiting to see how other denominations would work in this new situation" (Johnson, 138). Racial discrimination certainly abounded. St. John's in Charleston, formerly so active in outreach to the black community, changed its constitution so that only white males could become members of the congregation. What led to such a change? Many of the white members were irritated that some of the freedmen were sitting in the same pews as the black members! Certainly a very poor decision came out of such thinking.

Add to that the fact that the people who had been recently freed were often desperately poor. Trying to adjust to freedom, and yet not having had the opportunities for education or skills training, it was a very difficult situation for many of them. Certainly it wasn't an ideal time for the freedmen to take responsibility for supporting their own churches. Adding all these factors together, you can understand that it was a very unclear, very difficult situation. Unfortunately the Lutheran Church seems to have made some poor judgments. It was into that atmosphere, an atmosphere of confusion, that the Synodical Conference began their mission work to the blacks.

Chapter 4 Synodical Conference Missions

In 1872 the Synodical Conference was organized. Included in its constitution was this paragraph regarding its scope of activities:

The doctrine and the practice of the church; the relation of pastors in congregations of one synod to those of other synods in the Synodical Conference; the relation of the individual conference as a whole, or its individual members to church bodies not belonging to the Synodical Conference; matters pertaining to home and foreign mission work, as also to mission work among immigrants; hospitals and orphanages; the publishing of Lutheran literature, in general, and of Lutheran tracts, in particular; the training of pastors and teachers; and the like (Dickinson, 38).

That is a tremendously broad scope of activities, and allowed the Synodical Conference to become involved in many different facets of ministry.

Soon after its inception, the Synodical Conference felt the calling to become involved in mission work. Having become recently more confessional in regards to its relations to the German mission societies, the Synodical conference was looking for an outlet to use the money which members of the Synods were giving to support missions. No longer did they feel comfortable sending those monies to Hermannsburg or Leipzig. And yet in 1876 the LC-MS received \$2,434.59 for the Hermannsburg Society, and \$754.12 for Leipzig. This presented a dilemma. Certainly the pastors wanted to encourage mission work. But they didn't want to support the unionistic societies of Germany. The Synodical Conference on missions reported in 1876: "If we make no use of the desire of our Lutheran Christians to do something for heathen missions, they will surely apply their money where we would not like to see it go" (Dickinson, 39). While wasn't the pinnacle of Gospel motivation (!), it did hasten the Synodical Conference to get involved in missions.

Why start with the African-Americans? Most probably it was because of H.A. Preus, at that time the retiring president of the Norwegian Synod, also grandfather of J.A.O.

Preus. He presented an overture to the group that they ought to start mission work, and suggested that it could be done either among the Indians or among the Negroes. The latter direction was chosen, and they were off and running.

The man chosen to do the initial exploration was a man named John Frederick Doescher, recommended by C.F.W. Walther. Doescher began his work in Little Rock, spending several months there. Later he traveled through Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and Tennessee, preaching in many of the cities and some of the large plantations. He then headed to Fort Wayne, to report to the 1878 convention.

Looking back their timing wasn't particularly good. All over the South carpetbaggers were being hounded, captured, even executed. The white population, still bitter since they had lost the Civil War, felt that they ought to take out their anger on the black population. (If they couldn't beat the North, they could certainly beat the blacks.) The Civil Rights Bill of 1875, granting the blacks equal rights in theaters, inns, etc., was struck down by the Supreme Court in 1883 as unconstitutional. In 1877 President Hayes came to an agreement with some representatives of the South which paved the way for the removal of Federal troops from the South. What this did was allow the KKK and other racist groups to harass people, almost unhindered. On several occasions white Lutheran ministers had to be whisked out of town, often by the Black people, to avoid being the object of a KKK lynch mob. Into this type of situation the Synodical Conference set out to do mission work.

A setback came when Doescher was lost to the Synodical Conference. He sided with the Ohio Synod in the election controversy, and so was removed from the Synodical Conference. The work would have to be continued by others.

After Doescher there were a number of missionaries who served for some time, but the name worth noting is Niles J. Bakke. He succeeded Doescher in New Orleans, and stayed there for 11 years, serving two churches and their day schools. Later he

moved to the North Carolina field, and spent many years there. He would also be instrumental in beginning the work in Alabama, the field from which Henry Grigsby would come. Bakke's whole ministry was spent in the black missions.

The mission work was expanded in 1891, when several black congregations in North Carolina invited the Synodical Conference to come and minister to them. These congregations, holdovers from the North Carolina Synod, were served by black pastors - Revs. David Koontz, Samuel Holt, Nathan Clapp, and William Philo Phifer. When they sent their request for help, Bakke and two others went to investigate. They found that these men had very little theological training, but Bakke et. al. were willing to work with them and instruct them. They sent a request for a graduate/graduates to be sent to the field, but none were sent. Instead, the call was extended to Pastor Bakke. So he left New Orleans, and came to North Carolina.

North Carolina was a fertile field, and there were some very good results. By 1905, nineteen of the twenty-eight mission stations of the Synodical Conference were located in North Carolina. Christian Day Schools were used extensively as mission tools. Since the field had prospered, it made sense that this field would receive most of the focus of their mission work. That would remain the case until 1915, when the work began in the Alabama field.

An extremely important part of the North Carolina field was the establishment of worker training schools. Immanuel Lutheran Seminary was established in 1903. This consisted of three departments: a theological training school, a two year college (for teacher training), and a high school. In 1905, the school was moved to Greensboro, NC, where it remained for 56 years. It was to this Seminary (or to Luther College) that all blacks who desired to become pastors or teachers were required to go.² It was at

²Luther College was established in New Orleans in that same year (1903) using the same pattern as Immanuel. Incidentally, this effort to have all blacks attend one of these two schools was effective all the way up to 1942, when a black man entered Concordia in Oakland, CA. He later finished his education at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis.

Immanuel Seminary where Pastor Grigsby received his theological training.

As stated earlier, in 1915 the focus of the work expanded to include Alabama, beginning in Wilcox County. Wilcox County would probably have been the last place to begin work in Alabama had it not been for the hand of the Lord. Almost completely a rural area, there was no heavily populated urban center in the county. In fact, in 1977 there were only two populated centers in the county which needed traffic signal lights! (Dickinson, 69) Johnson writes, "Few places in the US were more poverty stricken, more rampant with ignorance and superstition, or more ingrained with hopelessness than Wilcox County" (167). And yet it was in this county that mission work in Alabama began, and it was in this area that the missions saw tremendous growth.

The story of the Synodical Conference entrance into this field is certainly a fascinating one. It begins with a young lady named Rosa J. Young. In 1912, at the age of 22, she had organized the Rosebud Literary and Industrial School at Rosebud, Alabama. She served as one of the teachers in this school, she saw to it that funds were raised to support it, and she had secured donated labor to build a four-room schoolhouse. But in 1914 a boll weevil infestation brought economic tough times to the whole county, and the Rosebud School was in danger of closing. Miss Young wrote letters to everyone she could think of, looking for help. Eventually Booker T. Washington suggested that she contact the Synodical Conference. She did so with this letter.

Neenah, Alabama
October 27, 1915

Rev. C. F. Drewes
St. Louis, Missouri

Dear Friend:

I am writing you concerning a school I have organized. I began teaching here in 1912 with seven pupils in an old hall, where the cattle went for shelter. Since then I have bought (with money collected in the community) five acres of land and erected a four-

room schoolhouse thereon, beside our chapel, which we are working on now, bought 45 seats, 5 heaters, 1 school bell, 1 sewing machine, 1 piano, a nice collection of useful books, and 150 New Testaments for our Bible-training Department.

I am writing to see if your Conference will take our school under its auspices. If you will take our school under your auspices, we will give you the land, the school building, and all its contents to start with. If you cannot take our school, I beg the privilege to appeal to you to give us a donations to help us finish our new chapel. No matter how little, any amount will be cheerfully and thankfully received.

This school is located near the center of Wilcox County, 12 miles from the county seat, 54 miles from Selma, Alabama, two miles from the L and N Railroad, amid 1,500 colored people. The region is very friendly; both white and colored are interested in this school. I hope you will see your way clear to aid us.

Yours humbly,
Rosa J. Young
(Johnson, 166-7)

The Synodical Conference decided to investigate, and Bakke was called on to check out the situation more closely. He arrived on Dec. 20, 1915. After looking over the situation and talking to the people, he brought a favorable report to St. Louis. The Synodical Conference again called on Bakke, now with about 40 years of experience in the black missions, to be the man to begin the work in the field.

He began his work in January of 1916. And what exciting work it was! Miss Young was retained in the school, but the school was changed from a secular school to a Lutheran school. On Palm Sunday of that year, 70 were confirmed and 12 were baptized. On Easter Sunday, 49 were baptized. On July 2, 14 more were baptized, and 43 more were confirmed. The church now consisted of 75 baptized and 113 confirmed members, a total of 188 souls. (Dickinson, 67)

The growth in the field was phenomenal. After only fifteen years, there were 34 congregations and teaching places. (Many of these congregations were started as offshoots of the congregation in Rosebud. Generally, it happened that a member would move to a neighboring town, and he/she would begin a church there.) The statistical report of 1932 lists 2,684 souls. (Dickinson, 69) In addition, the demand for

workers was so intense that Alabama Lutheran College was established at Selma in 1922. The school consisted of both a prep school and a normal school, later a grade school was added. It's first priority was to train young women for the teaching ministry. But boys could also attend if they were going to prepare for the ministry. Again, this school would play an important role in the life of Pastor Grigsby, as he would attend high school at Alabama Lutheran.

This field remained fruitful until the mid-1930s, when depopulation of the rural areas slowed things down tremendously. The young men often couldn't find any type of employment in Wilcox County, and moved north, looking for jobs. Because of that the black population of the county declined, from 27,602 in 1910, to 19,319 in 1930, to 10,151 in 1980. But the work there had tremendous effects. As these young people who had grown up Lutheran moved to the North, they took their Lutheranism with them, and helped to found Lutheran churches in many of the northern urban areas, such as Detroit and Chicago.

It was in Wilcox County, Alabama where Pastor Henry Grigsby grew up. Having some historical perspective, we are now prepared to look at the life of Pastor Grigsby.

CHAPTER 5 Growing up in Alabama

Henry Woodrow Grigsby was born January 10, 1906, in Camden Alabama. He was the third child in a large family. (Thirteen children altogether, six boys and 7 girls.) His parents were not well educated. His father could not read. His mother could - she had attended school through grade two. But what his father couldn't read, he could remember. Pastor Grigsby's father memorized the entire catechism, so he could instruct his children in the Word.

Henry's father was employed by the L&N Railroad. Later, when Henry was high school aged, his parents also began to run a small (20-acre) farm.

Growing up in this large family was a pleasant experience for Henry. There could be no disagreements among the family members. "Lucy Mae (his mother) didn't stand for it." If a disagreement got started, you were asked to leave until you could settle it peaceably, and no supper until it was done.

With such a large family there was plenty of work to be done. Henry was trained to help in the house. He "learned to do most anything about the house, including cooking." It was Henry's job to help braid his little sisters' hair, to make sure that the clothes were clean and neat, to help with cooking. His mother always told him, "Someday you're going to get married. Now what happens if your wife gets sick and you don't know how to do all this? Your house will look like a pig sty!"

Chores needed to be done before anything else. Working in the house was fine with Henry generally, but when he could he would sneak down to his uncle's farm. There he could help out with the farm chores, including milking the cows. "If the cow would let you milk them! Often they knew it was somebody different, and if you weren't doing it right, the cow would look at you and then bowl you over!"

When Henry reached the age of 12 or so, he became tired of doing housework, because none of his buddies had to do that. It especially became hard if they were

going to be outside playing baseball. Then Henry yearned to be outside, pitching the ball to his buddies.

Henry had one unusual talent which made him quite popular. It seems that the local store would sell peanuts out of a barrel. The cost was 5 cents/handful. Henry always had very big hands, and so when the kids went to the store, they would ask Henry to come along and pick out their handful.

Public education in Camden was quite poor. Most adults at that time couldn't read. The county ran the public school, and it met in a church building. There was no decent seating for the kids. The county supplied only the teacher, everything else was up to the community. And so there were no desks. Instead, there would be long pine benches for the children, and sometimes there wouldn't even be those.

The biggest problem with the school was that it met sporadically. First of all, it could only meet about four months out of the year, from late October until late January or early February. The kids were needed out in the fields during the other months, and so school was put onto the back burner. In addition, school could only be held if there were a teacher to teach. Often the county had problems attracting a teacher to this rural area, and so there were years that the school only met about two months out of the year.

Henry attended the public school for several years, and then the Lutherans came to town. They set up one of their typical "T" shaped chapel/schools in Tait's Place, about one and a half miles from Camden. (The long part of the "T" was the chapel, the sides of the top crossbar would be two classrooms.) The pastor of this mission congregation was E.A. Westcott.

The Lutherans were met with mixed emotions by the blacks in Camden. On the one hand, the chance for a good education was of tremendous value to them. The school

met seven months/year, much more than the public school did.³ There was no worry about finding a teacher every year.

But on the other hand the people didn't trust the Lutherans. Grigsby relates: "There were all sorts of wild tales. People said that those German folks would snatch your children away and put them into a camp and you won't know where they're at."

Added to that was the difference in religion. Pastor Grigsby's family grew up Baptist. Henry was put onto the Mourner's Bench, but he was never accepted because he "didn't feel a thing."⁴ When the Lutherans wanted the children to not only attend school, but church as well, the parents weren't real excited about that. But the children often defied their parents and went to the church anyway. Pastor Grigsby recalls going to church at the Lutheran Church, getting done, and then waiting for his parents' service at the Baptist Church to end. "We would stop at the playground until the folks got done shouting and playing around."

Grigsby's first year in the Lutheran School was his fourth grade year. At the end of that year he was baptized, and he also joined the church at that time. His folks were not happy about it, and his uncle was especially displeased. But his parents were willing to let the pastor come to the house for instruction classes. It was a long, slow process, but when Henry was in high school, his parents joined the Lutheran Church.

The teachers at Tait's Place Lutheran School did a very good job of recruiting future workers. "The teachers always said, 'When you become a pastor or teacher, you will teach it this way.'" Notice, it wasn't if you become a pastor/teacher, but when. Having had good experiences with grade school, having been encouraged throughout to

³ Originally they began to meet for nine months, but the people complained because it took away too much of the work force from the farm.

⁴ Not only was the Baptist church strong there, but there would be revival preachers who would travel through the area. Grigsby recalled attending a Pentecostal revival when he was in his early teens. He attended with his cousin. The preacher was, of course, pushing for conversion experiences. Grigsby related, "I didn't feel a thing." His cousin, however, said, "I felt like I was going across the ocean on a plank!"

become a pastor, it was a natural that Pastor Grigsby would continue his education at Alabama Lutheran Academy, in Selma, Alabama.

CHAPTER 6 Growing in the Word

In chapter four we discussed the founding of Alabama Lutheran Academy, needed to supply teachers for the many Lutheran schools which were springing up in Alabama. When Grigsby arrived there for high school, it was still meeting in rented facilities, just getting its feet on the ground. Grigsby's class of fifteen students would be the second class to go through the school.

The big adjustment for Henry during these year was living away from home. Selma was only about 37 miles from Camden, but that was far enough away so that he was only able to return home once every several months. So Grigsby lived in the dormitories.

Classes were just as challenging at Selma as at any other preparatory school. Grigsby was required to take three years of Latin, three years of German, and the usual reading, writing, and arithmetic. School cost \$40 or \$50 per year, and his parents paid for it. Grigsby did, however, try to pick up odd jobs around Selma as he had opportunity.

A mighty tempting opportunity came his way during high school. Grigsby was an excellent baseball player, a pitcher. One day a scout saw him play and offered him a contract to play with the Kansas City Monarchs. The Monarchs was the team for which Satchell Paige pitched. The scout offered Grigsby \$600/month to play for the Monarchs. Considering that about 15 years later Grigsby's salary would be less than \$50/month, this must have been a very tempting offer. Grigsby turned it down. "Pastor Westcott and Superintendent Schmidt (an area supervisor) would have been disappointed in me, and so would my classmates."

The pastors of that area enjoyed having Henry around. Many of the pastors at that time were serving multiple congregations. During the wet months, the roads would get quite muddy and difficult to navigate. Often the pastors would ask Henry to

accompany them on their travels, if he could, for the following reason. When the car would get stuck, Henry was strong enough that he was able to pick up the back of the car! The pastor could then wedge something under the wheels and drive out of it.

When his high school years were completed, Grigsby went on to Immanuel Lutheran College/Seminary in Greensboro, NC. His college and Seminary years were again quite similar to what we still have, with one exception. His foreign language training - Hebrew and Greek - was not as strong. He had about one year of Greek, and just a touch of Hebrew. It wasn't a matter of choice. It was because there were no teachers to teach them.

To support himself, Grigsby worked a number of jobs. Often people would call the college when they needed some work to be done, and the students would go and do the job. One summer he painted for a living. Another summer he unloaded railroad cars. A highlight for him came when one time an LC-MS member named Wolf gave him \$500. School cost between \$300 and \$400, so this was a substantial gift.

His vicar year was spent in Wilcox County. Instead of spending the year at one church, he moved around to the various churches, filling in for vacationing pastors.

As for any Seminarian, Call Day was a highlight. Unlike now, they didn't know which day it would be. So during the last two weeks of school they often kept their bags packed and labeled, ready to go when they should be sent. When the day came, President Nau of the Seminary would address the students at the end of chapel, telling the graduates which field they were going to be serving. (The graduate wouldn't actually find out which congregation he would be serving until he reported to the field itself.) Grigsby, as well as the other five men in his class, were assigned to the Alabama field, which continued to grow. The superintendent of that field was E.A. Westcott, the same pastor who earlier had baptized and confirmed Henry Grigsby. Now he assigned Henry Grigsby to Ebenezer Lutheran Church in Atmore, Alabama.

Chapter 7 Beginning the Ministry

"I arrived at Atmore, fresh out of school, all this energy packed up. You were anxious to get anyplace you could do some good. Finally, here was a chance to get out and try some of the knowledge you think you got." Such were the impressions that Pastor Grigsby had as he entered the ministry at Atmore.

Atmore was a city of about 15,000 people, located between Mobile and Montgomery. The church there was very small, with only eighteen communicant members when Pastor Grigsby arrived. Pastor Grigsby was the first resident pastor for this congregation. When he arrived he was to look up a man named James McCants who later proved to be Pastor Grigsby's right hand man.⁵

Pastor Grigsby set right to work. He noticed that although the congregation was Lutheran, it seemed to be Lutheran in name only, not really knowing its Scriptures very well. He also noticed that the congregation seemed to be "just sitting there." Well, they didn't just sit there for very long.

Pastor Grigsby set to work in the Day School. It was his duty to teach all eight grades by himself. School met for seven months out of the year. He had attempted to have it meet for nine months, but the county complained, asking them to cut back to seven months. (The county schools were only meeting for seven months at that time, so for the Lutherans to meet for nine months would have made them look bad!) The school day lasted from 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM. Catechism was taught on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, with Bible History the other two days. Pastor Grigsby taught religion class to all eight grades at one time. The different levels would receive different memorization assignments, but studied the lesson together.

⁵The McCants brothers, James and Henry, had originally been members of the Rosebud congregation. When they came to Atmore, it was these two brothers who brought the Lutheran Church with them. Rosa J. Young's work certainly had a wide-ranging effect in Alabama! When Ebenezer celebrated its 50th Anniversary in 1975, there were still McCants' on the membership rolls, one of them serving as the church treasurer.

Pastor Grigsby also worked hard to instruct this congregation, to more firmly ground them in the truths of God's Word. On Wednesday night there was Catechism instruction for the whole congregation. Pastor Grigsby worked hard at trying to make present-day applications from the familiar Bible History accounts.

On Sunday mornings there would also be instruction. He would begin by having the entire families together for thirty minutes or so. Then the children would go off to Sunday School and the adults would have Bible Class. This would last for about forty-five minutes. After that there would be a break time of about ten minutes - "enough time for me to brush up on my notes" - and then the congregation would reassemble for worship.

The worship service itself was the typical Lutheran liturgy. Since there was no other organist, Pastor Grigsby played the reed organ himself.⁶ He would speak the pastor's words from the organ bench, and then play the responses.

All the hard work in instructing people seemed to pay off. "The congregation grew in membership and in attitude." (When Grigsby left in 1934, the congregation had grown to about 100 communicant members.) Perhaps one of his prize pupils was a man named Peter Hartley. Hartley couldn't read, but he could memorize. And so, as Grigsby's father had done earlier, Hartley memorized the entire catechism.

People seemed to like to memorize. "It was something that they could use. There we were, right in the midst of all those Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, etc. They could use those Bible passages. In fact, the neighbors grew to know that if you took on a Lutheran, you'd better know where you were going, 'cause those Lutherans knew their Bible."

It was also here in Atmore that Grigsby became a strong proponent of Vacation

⁶Playing the organ proved to be a bit of a challenge for Pastor Grigsby. He had learned to play a bit in school, but hadn't practiced much because he had wanted to play baseball all the time! So now he was forced to learn how to play by himself.

Bible School. One year he had the biggest VBS in the district - 107 pupils! Grigsby did most of the teaching himself, although he did use some of the older students to assist him in teaching the younger students.

In 1934, merely three years after arriving, Grigsby was transferred to a different ministry. (More on the process in chapter 10.) Although he was only here for a short time, his ministry was very rewarding and fruitful. The Lord had blessed his work here. The Lord would continue to bless his work in his new calling.

Chapter 8 A Man on the Go

Having proved faithful at Atmore, Grigsby was given a challenging assignment. He was made pastor of three congregations, St. John's in Vida or Joffree, Bethlehem in Holy Ark, and the Maplesville congregation. In addition to this, he was responsible for institutional work at the Veteran's Hospital in Tuskegee. All of this made Pastor Grigsby very much a man on the go.

Here is a look at a typical schedule for a week:

Monday.....Teach grade school
Tuesday AM.....Teach (until noon)
Tuesday PM.....Travel to Tuskegee
Wednesday.....Teach
Wednesday night.....Mid-week meeting at St John's, Vida
Thursday.....School
Thursday after school.....Travel to Holy Ark for home visits and midweek meeting
Friday.....Teach
Saturday.....Study
Sunday AM.....Worship at St John's, Vida and at Bethlehem, Holy Ark
Sunday Aft.....Worship at Maplesville, every other Sunday

Certainly there wasn't a lot of time to stop to catch your breath! The grade school was at Vida. (Pastor Grigsby taught grades 1-5.) Each of the congregations had their own Sunday School and staff.

One of the tasks which Pastor Grigsby undertook was to organize outings on Saturdays. These weren't just limited to the congregation, but were open to the community as well. They would have picnics, baseball games, etc. At first this idea met with a lot of resistance, but eventually it caught on. These outings really helped the congregation grow. "Attitudes changed. People grew closer to each other, trusted each other, looked out for each other. It also helped their attitude toward working hard during the week." Because these outings were open to the public, people began to look to Pastor Grigsby as the spiritual leader for the community. One can see the respect which the community had for Pastor Grigsby from the following anecdote.

A young man, a member of the church at Holy Ark, was arrested for cutting a young

lady with a knife. After he was arrested, the police came and told Pastor Grigsby about it. Grigsby went to the county building, and they allowed him to take the young man home with him without posting any bail, simply because he was the Lutheran pastor. In addition to this, they gave Pastor Grigsby and his church council the authority to hold the trial and make the decision as to what should be done with this young man. (The young lady was also a member at Holy Ark, so the Council could try it and hear both sides of the story.) When they had made their decision, they simply reported it to the sheriff.

People not only valued Pastor Grigsby, but they valued the doctrine which the Lutheran Church taught. "It was different. The Presbyterians were real strict. The Baptists were loose, and preached one thing, but didn't practice it. They seemed to allow almost anything for their friends. But the Lutherans preached and lived what the Bible said."

A rather disturbing trend during these days was that the Missouri Synod began to make overtures to the ALC to establish fellowship. A memo was sent out by St. Louis to the pastors and told them to "fellowship" with the ALC pastors in the area in order to get to know them, but also with an eye toward a possible merger. This greatly disturbed the pastors of that area. Their knowledge of the ALC pastors made them realize that the ALC pastors were willing to practice fellowship with almost anyone. Pastor Grigsby wrote to Immanuel Seminary about his concerns. They replied that he should stand fast by what he had learned and not abide by the order from St. Louis. "The strong suit of the Lutheran Church is doctrine and practice," they wrote. "If it ain't doctrine, we can't practice it!" Pastor conferences were heated with this discussion. The men felt that St. Louis was trying to dictate to them. One man remarked, "If we do that, we might as well stop practicing Lutheranism."

In spite of this difficulty, work continued to get done. As he had at Atmore, Grigsby

stressed VBS in these congregations. He used to hold the VBS at Holy Ark. He would give a ride to about twelve students from Vida, taking them the seven miles to Holy Ark. The VBS lasted from 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM, and would continue for four weeks during the summer. They taught Bible History, hymns, and some accounts from history of how the Lord had blessed the church. Also there would be craft work, and singing.

But the Lord also declared that it is not good for a man to be alone. During these years at Vida, the Lord blessed Henry Grigsby with a helper suitable for him.

Note: The congregation in Vida is sometimes identified as being in the town of Joffre. The Post Office was designated as Vida, so Pastor Grigsby and the people usually referred to the church as being located in Vida, even though it was probably technically correct to say that it was in Joffre.

Chapter 9 Marriage

While Grigsby was still in Atmore, he attended a Pastor's Conference in Joffre (Vida). It was traditional that the whole congregation would gather with the pastors for the evening session of the conference. At that evening session there was a young lady who caught Pastor Grigsby's eye. He inquired of one of his friends as to "who that nice chick was!"

Later that year there was a Sunday School convention, and it just so happened that the young lady who had caught Pastor Grigsby's eye attended that convention. It was then that Henry Grigsby was introduced to Cotty Malachi Stoudermire. They hit it off, and he began to court her. When he was sent to Vida/Holy Ark/Maplesville, Cotty ("Cottie") all of a sudden was a member of one of his congregations! When he first arrived there a Vida, Cotty was at Alabama Lutheran. Their romance continued, and on September 18th, 1939, they were married.

Being married to such a busy man was no easy proposition. Cotty and Henry received an "omen" on their wedding day that there could be tough sledding ahead. The "omen" was that on the same day that they were married, Pastor Grigsby had to conduct a funeral. The funeral was held at 10:00 AM, the wedding about 3:00 PM.⁷

What also made young married life difficult were the rules which the Synodical Conference had established for pastors wives. They were not allowed to work outside of the home. Especially they were forbidden to teach in the Christian Day School, lest one family receive two pay checks from the church.

Now none of this would have been a problem if the pay which the Synodical Conference was giving had been adequate. But there were money problems, and the salaries were extremely low. When Grigsby came to Vida, his salary had been about \$40/month, plus six cents/mile traveling expense. After a couple of cuts, by the time

⁷ While this was something difficult at the time, Pastor and Mrs. Grigsby have learned to laugh about it over the years. Many of Grigsby's friends tease him: "There were two funerals on that day!"

they were married Pastor Grigsby's salary had been cut to \$32/month, and his mileage to four cents/mile. Pastor Grigsby wrote a letter to the missionary board, protesting the cuts, and when he received his next check, his mileage had again been cut, to 2 1/2 cents/mile. "It wasn't easy," remarked Mrs. Grigsby. "You had to be dedicated to what you did."

And yet the Lord continued to bless this young couple. He saw to it that this couple always was provided for. Often a parishioner would stop in for coffee and to talk. When he'd leave, there would be a \$5.00 bill sitting on the table. Others would stop to ask Pastor and Mrs. Grigsby for gardening advice, where they could get certain seeds. Because Pastor and Mrs. Grigsby had a large garden, they often knew just where that particular seed could be found. The people would use that as an excuse to give the Grigsby's a cash gift for the service which they had provided. Grigsby explained it this way. "The Lord said, 'My servant is out there.' He provided. He promised, 'I will be with thee.' We experienced that in a concrete way." In the face of tremendous difficulty, the Lord looked out for this couple. But there was trouble brewing, and the Grigsby's were in for a big change in direction.

Chapter 10 Storm Clouds

What was life like in the South during those days? Dickinson has a lengthy treatment of that question, which is very illuminating. When Hayes was elected president, he ordered that all federal soldier be withdrawn from the South. Dickinson traces for us the results of this action:

The southern states deliberately and systematically stripped the Negroes of their political rights and offices. The old slave codes were reintroduced and made legal under the title "Black Codes." A social caste system based on race was meticulously created and unscrupulously maintained that placed the freedmen in a lower social relation to whites than they had endured under the yoke of slavery. So determined was the South to set up this system that very many persons, white and Black, who resisted their will, mysteriously disappeared never to be heard from again in this world.

Under this new system, not only were the bathrooms and drinking fountains segregated, but in every aspect of life the Negro or white person was reminded of his "place" in the social system. Blacks were never to approach the front door of a white family....Whites were never to approach the back door of the Black family. Whites were to be addressed always with a title...to their names, such as Mr,...Boss, or Captain. Blacks were to be called always by their first name, or some degrading nickname or title. Young white men, teenagers, to be more precise, often showed their manhood by demanding of the Black population that they be call "Mr." Black people, on the other hand, were never given titles of honor.... Black ministers were never called Reverend or Pastor by the white population. To them, he was never more than "preacher."...

The white people of the old South took their segregation straight. They were striving for peaceful coexistence of the races, but within the system which they had created.... According to their policies, violence was their last resort, but they were never without the nerve to use it in achieving their goals.

When a white denomination such as the "Lutheran" church began working in those Black communities, especially the rural communities of Alabama and Mississippi, it was seen as a threat to the system, not to be tolerated in their locality. When this white denomination sent in white missionaries, this intensified the threat. When these churches opened day schools to give education to the "darkies," the local whites began to resist. When the white missionaries began to execute the strategy of house visitation among the members and home visitations for mission outreach, this was the last straw. When it was discovered further that some of these missionaries were sitting down and dining with the

families of the colored people and on an equal social level, the machinery for enforcement went into action....

It happened somewhere in rural Mississippi that the Rev Bakke was prospecting among the colored people to determine the feasibility of starting a Lutheran church among them. News had traveled around this little community that there was a white man visiting with the colored people in their homes and that he associated with them on an equal level....

It seems that the white people had been informed that Reverend Bakke, the missionary, was scheduled to leave on the evening train. The KKK prepared a reception and a send-off party for him. They were waiting "en masse" at the railroad station. An old Black Baptist deacon, a leader of the community, concealed the missionary in his wagon and spirited him away. Taking back roads through the woods and pressing his team at dangerous at dangerous speeds for the road conditions, he arrived at the train station, eight miles down track, just in time for the train. Of course, the story could not become public knowledge until quite some time later. It could have been dangerous, even fatal for the courageous Black Baptist deacon. The Lutheran Church does owe a dept (sic) of gratitude to the Baptists in this episode.

Not only were the white missionaries watched very closely and often warned about the dual social system of the South, but also the Black Lutheran workers were not immune to similar treatment and/or persecution in those days. Anyone who seemed to threaten the system took his life in his hands. (79-82)

Dickinson cites this evidence in trying to determine why the Synodical Conference established some of their policies, some of which seem somewhat confusing.

The policy which is particularly confusing, perhaps explained because of the social caste system, was the mission board's policy that they were in charge of the missions, not the pastors actually out in the congregation. The white superintendent was responsible only to St. Louis, not to the pastors serving under him. That was a situation which the whites could probably accept and the blacks would probably put up with, since it was in force everywhere else.

Where this central control showed its head was in the doctrine of the call. The congregations in these mission districts had to write a "waiver clause" into their constitutions. What happened was that the congregation basically waived the right to

call its own pastors and teachers, and instead gave that right to the missionary board, until they should become self-supporting. Therefore, the black mission congregation had no say in its own called workers. This also meant that the missionary board had the right to set salaries for the men at whichever level they wished. They were under no obligation either to the pastors or to the congregations for how they handled themselves. That is why Pastor Grigsby, having served successfully at Ebenezer in Atmore, could be removed from that position after only three years and moved to another post, no questions asked or answered.

The way it was handled was that the pastors met for conference every summer. At the end of that conference the superintendent of the field would read the names of the men and where they would be serving for the next year. Neither the congregation nor the pastor had any assurance that the pastor would serve in one place for more than one year.

This authority came to play significantly in the life of the Grigsby's. In the previous chapter we related how Grigsby's salary had been cut severely, as well as his mileage allowance. This was extremely frustrating for the Grigsby's.⁸

But the situation came to a head when Mrs. Grigsby was taken ill. Her illness required her to receive medication every day, which needed to be administered by a medically trained person. This meant that the Grigsby's were having to drive to the hospital every day, about a 50 mile round trip. Pastor Grigsby wrote to ask that he be given some help in the classroom, at least for a couple weeks, until the load of traveling would lighten. The answer that he received was infuriating. Not only was no assistance given, but Pastor Grigsby was reminded that his place was in the classroom, and that was where the superintendent would expect him to be.

⁸ There was a touch of irony in the whole salary issue. It seemed to be policy that if a man got married, he would receive a \$10/month raise to help him cover the new expenses. Well, it just so happened that just as the Grigsby's were getting married, a new set of salary cuts were enacted. And so Pastor Grigsby, instead of receiving the \$10 raise, received a \$5/month cut in salary.

When the next Annual Conference took place in Birmingham, Grigsby resolved to talk to Superintendent Westcott about the problems. He hadn't yet decided what action he would take. Unfortunately, Westcott never made the time to see him. So at the end of the conference Pastor Grigsby handed Westcott a very simple note, which read, "At the close of the meeting on Sunday, I will not consider myself the pastor of the congregation any longer." The storm clouds had come. In August of 1941, Henry Woodrow Grigsby was no longer a pastor in the Synodical Conference.

Chapter 11 Looking for a Place to Call "Home"

As one might well expect, there was a tremendous change in the lives of Henry and Cotty Grigsby. All his life he had been preparing for or performing church work. Now he had resigned from that work. Where would he go? What would he do?

Immediately there were problems. Westcott himself came to be vacancy pastor of the congregations. On the first Sunday that Communion was served, Westcott refused to serve Pastor Grigsby. Grigsby realized that he needed to move to a different area as quickly as possible.

It just so happens that Pastor Grigsby was not the only pastor to have resigned from that field. He was actually the last of four who had resigned, all in protest of some sort over Synodical Conference dealings with them. One of those men, L. Means, had moved to Pensacola, Florida, where he was working at a U.S. Naval Yard. When he heard that Grigsby had resigned, he urged him to come to Pensacola, to work in the Naval Yard. Grigsby took him up on the offer and left for Florida late in 1941. Cotty stayed behind for a couple months. She lived with some relatives in the congregation and taught school until late January or early February, when a new teacher could be found. Then she left and rejoined Henry in Pensacola.

Grigsby was quickly hired in the Naval Yard. (At one time that yard employed no less than four former Synodical Conference, black ministers.) Cotty found herself a job in the U.S. Government Hospital. Things were looking up.

After a while one of the bosses at the Naval Yard noticed Grigsby. He noticed that Grigsby was a conscientious worker, who stayed focused on the project at hand and didn't waste time. So this worker approached Grigsby and suggested to him that he move north. There were much better job opportunities for people there, and Pastor Grigsby would get paid what he deserved.

At this same time there was a young man named Booker Tait, who was from the church in Atmore. He had been serving in the military, and now was going to be discharged. His plans were to go to Detroit and get a job there. He very quickly found a job as a bus driver. He told Grigsby about how quickly he had found the job, and also offered Grigsby a place to stay - with Tait's sister - until Henry and Cotty could find their own place. And so after some discussion, off they went to Detroit.

Pastor Grigsby very quickly found a job, in a roller bearing plant. Cotty also found a job as a cosmetics seller in a drugstore. Their first place to stay was a room which they rented from an older lady. They basically had one room for themselves, and they had to share kitchen and bathroom both with the landlady and also with another couple who was living there. That just wasn't going to cut it.

So off they went, looking for a house to buy. The Lord very quickly led them to one they could afford. There was one problem, however. The owner wanted a deposit of \$1,000. Grigsby's had only \$300. So the realtor took them to a financier, to see if the additional money could be raised.

There the Grigsby's told their story. When the asked them how long they had been in Detroit, Pastor Grigsby figured, "this is where it (the application) goes into the waste basket." They told the man that they had only been there for three weeks. Surprisingly, that didn't end the interview. Instead the young man went and got his boss. The upshot was that they believed the Grigsby's, loaned them \$700 to go along with the \$300 that the Grigsby's had, and they were able to buy their first home. This was quite a step to take, because the \$300 was the last money that the Grigsby's had. They once again had to simply trust that the Lord would provide. And he did.

So they begin working. Pastor Grigsby worked the graveyard shift (11:00 PM - 7:00 AM). Cotty worked during the day. After a month Henry took a second job, at the Hudson Motor Car Plant. (This was located right behind their house.) So now Grigsby

would come home from work at 7:25 AM or so, walk in the back door of his house, pick up the lunch which Cotty had fixed him, and walk directly to the Motor Car Plant. When he arrived home at 3:30 PM, he would have something to eat, then go to bed. Cotty would return from work in the afternoon, and then it was her responsibility to make sure that Henry got up again to go to the Roller Bearing Plant. "It kept us straight. There was no time for wigglin' or waddlin!" One time Grigsby recalls not having had time to cash his checks for quite awhile. So he took them all and laid them out on the bed!

After three months Henry decided to give up his job at the Hudson Motor Company. Cotty continued to work at the drug store, with cosmetics. Giving up his second job left Henry with time to lend a hand to something he had a great love for - the work of the church. Now that some roots had been established and they had a place to call home, the pull towards service began to tug on Henry's sleeve once again. St. Titus Lutheran Church would be the benefactor.

Chapter 12 A Short-Lived Mission With Long Range Consequences

One of the first things which the Grigsby's did upon coming to Detroit was to find a Lutheran Church which they could attend. This wasn't an easy task. The first church which they attempted to attend politely but firmly told them, when it was just about time for the service to start, that a church for "their kind of people" was located across town. And so they drove many extra miles to get to St. Philip's, LC-MS.

But they had only been attending St. Philip's for a few months when the pastor there asked if they would be interested in joining St. Titus, a mission that was about to open. Because the mission would be considerably closer to their home, and because of the excitement of the opportunity to get a new mission off the ground, the Grigsby's accepted the offer and transferred to St. Titus.

St. Titus was a typical story. It was a fine church building which had a parsonage and a school. It had been a white church, and when the neighborhood changed, the people decided to build a new church out in the suburbs. But what about the wonderful facilities which they were leaving behind? The district decided to take over the facilities and open a new mission to the neighborhood. So in 1945 Pastor Hafner was called and the mission got started.

And what a start they had! Lots of activities were happening at the church. It was very quickly growing. They had opened up a Christian Day School jointly with St. Philip's. There was a Ladies Aid group and a choir and things seemed to be going quite well.

The Grigsby's were right in the midst of it. When Pastor Grigsby quit his job at Hudson, he was able to spend a lot of time at St. Titus. The physical plant had an old heating system which needed someone to oversee it to heat the building. Often Pastor Grigsby took care of that. He also ran the Sunday School. One time when Pastor Hafner had a serious accident it was Pastor Grigsby who picked up many of his duties.

Mrs. Grigsby was active in many things as well - Ladies Aid, Choir, whatever needed to be done.

But there were problems. There was friction between Pastor Hafner and the pastor of St. Philip's. Perhaps there was some jealousy because St. Titus was growing so quickly. Perhaps there are factors known only to Pastor Hafner and other pastors. But for whatever reason, Pastor Hafner took a call away after only a couple years. He was replaced by Jeff Johnson. Again, things seemed to be going pretty well. The congregation had grown to over 170 communicant members.

But then in January of 1952, the mission board abruptly closed the mission. The members were invited to attend either St. Philip's or Berea. Some went to St. Philip's, none went to Berea. (It was too far to be practical.) The whole group was shocked and disheartened by what they saw as a very abrupt action, and one which was never explained to them. At the closing service, Pastor Roth of the LC-MS gave Pastor Grigsby nine hymnals and seven Bibles. He also urgently encouraged Pastor Grigsby to "keep them together." In chapter fourteen we will examine how Zoar Lutheran Church developed out of this group, which eventually led to Pastor Grigsby's return to the ministry. But now we need to turn our attention to another gift which God gave to Henry and Cotty Grigsby - the gift of children.

Chapter 13 Daughters!

The story behind the birth of the Grigsby's first daughter is interesting. The Lord had seen fit to not give the Grigsby's any children for the first six years of their marriage. And so they had decided that they were going to adopt a child. Part of the adoption ritual was that you needed to have a physical. When Mrs. Grigsby had her physical, the doctor told her that she was expecting a child. The Grigsby's were both excited, although they did have a hard time believing that it was true. But sure enough, they were expecting. The adoption which they had been planning went on hold.⁹

After the sixth month of pregnancy Mrs. Grigsby was told that she needed to be off her feet. So she quit her job at the drugstore. On May 30, 1946 Stephanie Dolores was born. Doris Elaine was born October 23, 1947, and the youngest daughter, Henria Eletta, was born October 11, 1952.

All of a sudden priorities had to change in the Grigsby household. It was now more difficult to stay so active in the church, and yet that is what they did. No longer did Mrs. Grigsby work outside of the home, but she now devoted her energies to raising the daughters in a God-pleasing way.

A bit of a snag hit the Grigsby family in early 1952. Henry needed to have hip surgery. It seems that ever since boyhood he had been functioning with a hip which was out of joint. All that wear and tear had caused problems in the hip, and Henry would need surgery to correct the situation. They had known about the problem for some time, but in 1952, May of that year, he decided to have it done. He sent Mrs. Grigsby down to Florida with the two daughters. (Henria would be born later that year.) Then unbeknownst to Mrs. Grigsby he went in and had the surgery performed. "I didn't want her to worry about it, so I just went ahead and had it done. That way when she

⁹ One of Mrs. Grigsby's cousins had adopted, and after that had gone on to have nine children. Looking at that experience, the Grigsby's thought that it would be much better to wait with the adoption they had planned. If they wanted to adopt later, they still could.

came back it was out of the way." Grigsby ended up being in the hospital for three and a half months, and after that was in a light cast for several months.

One of the challenges of parenthood came when the girls reached grade school age. Recognizing the tremendous value of a parochial education, they wanted to enroll the girls in a Lutheran school. But the school which was closest to them wouldn't accept them "because their faces were too brown." Instead, they would have to travel about ten miles to take them to Berea Lutheran School.

This segregation became a problem for the Grigsby's. They didn't want their daughters to grow up seeing nothing but segregation. They wanted to teach their girls that all are created equal, and that all are free. Pastor Grigsby commented: "Are you going to let this (segregation) destroy you? You had to work on it to not let it bother you, because if it bothered you, it would destroy you."

But Pastor very quickly continued: "But we did it (taking the girls the extra miles to Berea) with joy. The children were an inspiration. We didn't sit home. We planned things to enjoy the children and make it pleasant for them."

The girls grew up as normal children in a God-fearing home. For example, they all took piano lessons as they grew up. They all were expected to do well in school, to participate in choir, etc.

Some of the fondest memories were of Sunday afternoon outings. They would often go to a park, or drive to Canada. If the weather was nice, they might go to the beach. Much to the chagrin of Mrs. Grigsby the girls delighted in taking handfuls of sand, throwing it straight up into the air, and letting it come right down into their hair.

Doris, the second child, described her childhood memories this way:

I often think of when he'd go out to see a member or something and he'd come home with groceries - inclusive of chocolate ice cream and New Era potato chips. My sister and I would whisper to each other, "We get good things."

Another fond memory is how he would sing in church. He sang from his heart. Even now when Zoar sings certain hymns, I can still hear his voice singing those songs. Palm Sunday is an especially difficult Sunday for me to get through. I can always hear him and see my mother directing the Junior Choir as they sang, "Ride on, Ride on, in Majesty," and "Hosanna Loud Hosanna."

Another vivid memory is our Sunday afternoon car rides and our outings at the park or playground. How I loved for my dad to push me in the swing. On the last day of school when we in grade school my mom would take us to Belle Isle and my dad would meet us there, and then if we had good report cards we would receive presents. One year I received roller skates and a dictionary. That evening, as we did so many evenings during the summer, we stayed at the park late and listened to the band concert -- you know, music under the stars!

When the girls reached high school age, it was off to MLS. They were unique, in that they were possibly the first blacks to attend the school.¹⁰ But they didn't seem to have any problems with that. Apparently MLS had done a good job preparing the student body to accept those young people for what they were - fellow Christians, equal with the rest of them.

While it was hard to have the girls away from home, Pastor and Mrs. Grigsby stayed in close contact with their girls. They would attempt to drive up to Saginaw every other weekend to see their daughters. Often the girls would bring friends home with them. On some weekends the girls would call and tell their parents not to come up, because they were going to go visit a friend's house.

After the two older daughters went through MLS, they attended Wisconsin Lutheran Teachers College in Milwaukee. Stephanie went on to New Ulm. Doris continued at Luther College in Detroit. (LC-MS) She later finished her schooling at Eastern Michigan University.

¹⁰The Grigsby's thought there might possibly have been one other black girl from Ohio who attended before their daughters did, but they weren't sure about it.

Henria took a little different route. After one year of MLS, she decided that she wanted to stay at home.¹¹ So she attended the LC-MS area Lutheran high school, then continued at Highland Park Junior College in the Detroit area. Afterwards she headed to the University of Idaho, where she earned a Master's Degree.

The chapter on family wouldn't be complete if we left out the foster children. Over the course of the years, the Grigsby's took in 52 foster children. Three of them came to the Grigsby's when they were 3, 4, and 5 years old respectively, and stayed with the Grigsby's until they were married.

Home life for the Grigsby's was filled with blessings from God. As the Lord blessed in those areas, he also blessed the Grigsby's in their work with the remnants from St. Titus.

¹¹ It was a little more difficult for Henria to be away from home. Mrs. Grigsby recalls how she would go back to MLS after a weekend determined that she would stay there for a couple weeks. But then Thursday would come and Henria would be on the phone, asking her parents to come get her for the weekend, or asking them if she could borrow bus fare and come home. It was a very typical case of homesickness. Ironically, she is now the daughter who lives furthest away from home, perhaps trying to prove that she could do it!

Chapter 14 Out of the Dust

The words of Pastor Roth, "Keep them together," continued to ring in the ears of Pastor Grigsby after St. Titus closed. In order to try to keep things going, he immediately opened up Sunday School in the "cleaners" across the street. He would also meet with the adults to have short devotions and give an opportunity for mutual encouragement.

The group petitioned the LC-MS several times, asking them for assistance to get back on their feet. But they were rebuffed time after time. They had to try something different, and believe it or not the help came from our rich uncle from Appleton.

An AAL agent named Otto Wirgau heard of this group of struggling Christians, and he also knew Pastor Wilmer Valleskey. He suggested to the group that they approach Pastor Valleskey and ask him if the WELS would be interested in helping them out. In early March (or late February) of 1952, Pastor Grigsby contacted Valleskey and a meeting was arranged. Valleskey described their his first meeting with the group:

My first meeting with between fourteen and eighteen people was held in the home of Mrs. Geraldine Taylor who lived on a side street, I believe, a couple block north of Chene, not too far from St. Titus Lutheran Church. It was a scary meeting for me, I admit today. Rioting was in the Detroit air. Driving alone into a blighted area of "old Detroit" in the dark of night with poor street lights in Chene and none on the side street where frame houses were set closely side by side. (sic) There were few house numbers to be seen on this debris littered street. Going back and forth I finally spotted a porch light. I remember the long porch going toward the rear of the home. I knocked and was ushered into a room lit by a 25-watt bulb and filled with people sitting around a large table. This white man who was having his first real contact with negros (sic) was "trembling" within. But all that disappeared as the people expressed their love of the Savior and longing to be served by Word and Sacrament.

Agreement was made that services could begin as soon as the group found a place to have them. Wolverine Baptist Church, a storefront church, was willing to rent to them, and Valleskey began services with the group on March 16, 1952.

Valleskey served the group for about 6 months, at which time the press of duties at his own church forced him to step down. Pastor Lyle Raasch, from one of the suburban missions stepped into his shoes and served the group until Pastor Percy Dumas, their first full-time pastor, began his work in 1955.

Unfortunately Dumas would only be with the group until April of 1957. Apparently there were problems between him and the group right from the beginning. Grigsby recalled that they were still meeting in the facilities of Wolverine Baptist Church. The Lutheran service was held first, and the Baptists held their service later in the morning. Pastor Dumas made it a habit to preach for so long that the start of the Baptist's service was delayed. This of course didn't go over too well, and soon the group was forced to leave the storefront.

They began to meet in the Sophie Wright Recreation Center. This was much less convenient, because there were often dances held in the center on Saturday night. When the Lutherans arrived on Sunday morning they would first have to do lots of clean-up, and then try to hold worship.

After Dumas left, the group again called on Pastor Valleskey for advice and leadership. The group was served by a number of men - Valleskey, Raasch, Edwin Frey, and Ed Fredrich among them. Call after call was issued. Call after call was returned. Pretty soon attention began to turn to a tall, humble, soft-spoken man within the group, Henry Woodrow Grigsby.

Chapter 15 Back in the Saddle Again

It was only natural that the group would eventually send the call to Pastor Grigsby. Pastor Valleskey wrote, "In all of my dealings with the group from the very start, before I knew he was a former pastor, I perceived that the people rallied around Henry Grigsby. There were other sound people,... but Henry Grigsby was looked to for the final say." Later he continues:

"Henry Grigsby was a self-sacrificing man. After Pastor Dumas left Zoar call after call for new pastors were declined. Finally ...Grigsby was moved to accept the call.... He left a good paying job to re-enter the ministry of his Lord. More. A few years later, when the congregation did not pay its share of the pastor's salary, rather than report this to the mission board, he took a job at a filling station to supplement his income. When I found out about this I reported it to our board which immediately took action to rectify the matter."

Grigsby was installed on the first Sunday of December, 1957.

It wasn't a terribly difficult transition back into the ministry. During the vacancies he had been quite active in keeping the congregation going. When there were times that no vacancy pastor could make it, Valleskey would ask Pastor Grigsby to fill in.

The first major challenge at Zoar was getting a permanent place to worship. The district took the first step by building what was called a "parsonage package church." What happened was that the living room was a large room, and on Sundays the Grigsby's would have to move their furniture out of the room and bring up chairs from the basement. The living room was then the chancel!

This arrangement had some serious disadvantages. First of all there was the inconvenience to the family. But more importantly was the image it portrayed to the community. Pastor Grigsby recalls many evangelism calls where the prospect reacted negatively when he found out that the "church" was the house down the block.

In 1967 a building was dedicated. The synod actually paid for the building, and Zoar made payments to the synod. This helped the church tremendously.

The ministry at Zoar was multi-faceted. Grigsby felt that his first priority was to really ground his little group in the Word. They had struggled so long, and had had so many vacancies that they were in desperate need of strengthening.

But he didn't want to merely look inward, he also wanted to expand his little flock, to bring the Word to others. And so there was an annual canvassing of the entire neighborhood around the church. As earlier, VBS was a priority.¹² The Sunday School was used for mission outreach.

Grigsby also tried to offer as many opportunities for Christian fellowship as possible. There was Junior and Senior choir, Ladies Aid, Young People's Society, the LWMS, an the altar guild. There were also special services held during the year, such as Membership Day. On that day, they would all go outside to see if they had enough people to entirely the circle the acreage of the property. Then they would take a picture of the group. Everyone made a special effort to get every member to church that day so that they would be able to see growth from year to year.

Grigsby made sure that Zoar took part in all the special district worship or fellowship events. For example, the choir always participated with the mass choir at the joint Reformation service. That area of the Michigan district also had a tradition of meeting at Killarney Lutheran Camp for Memorial Day celebrations. Virtually the entire membership of Zoar would attend that event.

The church showed gradual growth. When Grigsby took over, there were only 18 communicant members. That number grew to over 80.

In 1977, at the age of 71 and having served Zoar for twenty years, Henry Grigsby announced that he would retire in February of 1977. He and Cotty planned to move to Florida, near some relatives. But the hand of the Lord would come calling again!

¹² Zoar often asked for help with this. Often DMLC or MLS students would come to help with canvassing and teaching. Ron Buelow was one, as was Paul Bertolus. Kay Birkholz was the first student who came to help during a VBS. Sometimes they would have 200 kids or more. They would rent canopies to set up on the lawn so they had a place to hold class with all these children.

Chapter 16 "You're not quite done yet!"

During the late 60's and early 70's, Siloah Lutheran Church saw a rapid change in their neighborhood. The congregation decided that the Lord had called it to do mission work to the neighborhood, not to relocate, as many other churches had done. But they found that this was a difficult venture. The old segregation laws of the past were like ghosts which continued to haunt. It was difficult for the congregation, changing more and more from a white church to a black church, to really be one church. This distressed Pastor Hoffmann. He had known Pastor Grigsby for some years. Also, the principle at Siloah at that time was Ron Buelow, who had run several of Zoar's summer VBS's. When they heard that Pastor Grigsby was going to retire, some wheels began turning.

Siloah's parsonage at that time was empty. Pastor Hoffmann had moved out of it a couple years earlier. (The parsonage at Siloah is attached to the church. Hence the parsonage lawn is also the church lawn. Hoffmann's children needed some room to run, and the congregation agreed to allow them to move.) But now what do you do with an empty parsonage? It was rented to Seminary students for a couple years, which worked OK. But a more permanent solution was desired.

The solution seemed to present itself when word of Grigsby's coming retirement was heard. There in Detroit was a man who was as sharp as ever mentally, and who still had a love for the work, who needed a place to stay. Here in Milwaukee was a parsonage with no one living in it. Siloah decided to extend Pastor Grigsby a call as a retired pastor. He wouldn't be expected to perform most pastoral duties, simply to help out wherever he could. In exchange Siloah would grant him free use of the parsonage, also paying his utilities. After consulting with the Synod, who suggested that they also pay for his health insurance, the Call was extended.

Grigsby was quite surprised to receive the Call. But the challenge excited him. Pastor Hoffmann felt that Grigsby had a vital function which he could perform at Siloah. Hoffmann said to Grigsby, "I have two congregations here, and I want to have one. I think you are a man who could help to unite our black and white members into a more unified group." Grigsby decided to accept the Call.

After the Installation Day, Grigsby went to work. He preached periodically, as needed. He helped teach some Bible classes. He was available for counseling. But his main service was visiting the parents of the Day School children, encouraging the parents to become active as Lutheran Christians. One time Pastor Grigsby visited the home of some delinquent school parents. After his visit the lady came for a couple Sundays, then wasn't seen for three months. When Grigsby was informed of it, he replied, "I guess I'll have to go lick that calf over again!"

Grigsby has also been active in the Milwaukee area. He has done some work in the prisons. He has also been called upon by St. Philip's to serve as their vacancy pastor. In fact, they even extended a full-time call to him on one occasion. But realizing that he was no longer able to perform the many duties which were needed at St. Philip's, Pastor Grigsby returned their call.

Certainly the most important function which the Grigsby's have performed here is that they have helped to bring Siloah together. Pastor Rolfe Westendorf commented, "They did this in a very quiet and unassuming way." They earned the respect and admiration of the congregation because the congregation, both black and white, could see a very dedicated Christian couple, people who loved their Lord and served him.

Grigsby's days of active service are about over. Now 86 years old, he is hampered by arthritis. Cotty babysits for school children after the school day has ended. Grigsby also does some counseling from time to time. Most importantly, they continue to serve as role models, living their Christianity as they have over the years.

Chapter 17 Conclusions

What significance did Henry Woodrow Grigsby have for the WELS? Perhaps his daughter Doris said it best:

"The value of my father to the WELS, as I see it, is that it provides them with a readily available source to help them understand and suggest workable solutions to many of the problems that may be encountered as they seek to recruit black/minority members. He has lived during the time when blacks and whites were not equal, except in the sight of God, and has also lived to see the many changes that God has brought about in this area. He can relate to and anticipate problems that white ministers may encounter in trying to minister to Blacks. He can serve as a role model to black/minority youths so that they will be willing to enter the ministry or become valuable church members and evangelists.... He can also be a model father image for other black men to follow. Things he can tell WELS of historical value concerning the Lutheran church in the South would be invaluable being first hand; not hearsay."

Indeed, well chosen words.

Grigsby's advice is certainly fitting:

"Be what you are and deal with people. If someone calls himself white, he is still a person. If someone calls himself black, he is still a person. Every individual is a person, and if you remember that, you can deal with them. That has never failed me yet.

In addition, take time to listen. Take time to really hear what the complaints are, what the problems are.

But don't be afraid of your Lutheranism. When the missions came to Camden, they never once backed down from their convictions. Be what you are, and stand tall!

But the key is that I saw people as people, and never worried about the races. At Zoar we had both black and white members. When the district made an evaluation of Zoar they said, 'Zoar is one congregation where anyone can go to worship and feel at home.' I think one of the keys was the way we acted. We treated every individual as a person, not as a black or as a white."

But if there was one thing which struck me, it was the trust which the Grigsby's put in God to bring them through some very difficult situations. Pastor Grigsby liked to quote the passage, "Thou, Lord, seest me." He knew the truth of the passage from growing

up, from his ministry in the Synodical conference, from his years as a civilian, from his years with St. Titus/Soar, from his years at Siloah, and from his years with his family. The Lord was always there, always watching, always protecting.

The final chapter has not yet been written in the work of Pastor Grigsby, and Lord-willing it will not be written for a long time. The reason is that Pastor Grigsby's grandson - Brady Coleman - is presently attending NWC. If the Lord is willing, the effects of Pastor Henry Woodrow Grigsby will continue to be felt in the WELS for a long time to come!

Pastor and Mrs. Grigsby felt that this study would best be concluded by quoting one of their favorite Bible passages. It will be quoted from the King James, the version which the Grigsby's used for almost all of their lives. It is a passage which fits the Grigsby's well, a passage which they have lived throughout their lives. And so it is fitting that this paper should end with Psalm 37:25. "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

SOURCES

Books:

Dickinson, Richard C. Roses and Thorns. Concordia. St. Louis, 1977.

Johnson, Jeff G. Black Christians: The Untold Lutheran Story. Concordia. St. Louis, 1993. (The uncorrected page proofs version of this book was used.)

Interviews:

Grigsby, Henry and Cotty. Approximately fifteen hours of time.

Westendorf, Rolfe. One hour.

Correspondence:

Coleman, Stephanie. (daughter)

Davis, Doris. (daughter)

Valleskey, Wilmer.

Miscellaneous:

Various articles from the Siloah Lutheran, bulletin inserts, the Fiftieth Anniversary book of Ebenezer Lutheran Church, and some newspaper articles.

Historical Notes of EBENEZER LUTHERAN CHURCH

Ebenezer Lutheran Church had its beginning in Atmore in 1925. Previous to this time, Sunday School was held in the home of Jack and Mary Montgomery in Nokomis, Alabama.

In May, 1925, Pastors Schmidt and Schink toured Atmore and found 27 Lutherans here. A meeting was held at the home of Jack Montgomery and Henry McCants, May 28. Communion was celebrated. 18 were present. Little W. C. Peavy was baptized. The Christian Day School was also organized in 1925.

Ebenezer was being served by Pastor Schink at this time, he was assisted by Mr. Eckert during his absence that summer. 51 children were enrolled in Summer School. The baptized listing for 1925 rose to 32.

1926 Ebenezer was served by Rev. G. Kreft. The congregation numbered 53 souls.

1927 A House of Worship was purchased by the Mission Board.

1931-34 Rev. H. Grigsby served Ebenezer and was its first residential pastor. He also taught Day School. Ebenezer led the field with highest enrollment in V. B. S. 107.

1934-41 Rev. Brice L. Thompson was installed as Ebenezer's second residential pastor. He taught the Christian Day School also.

In January, 1938, the congregation purchased a tract of land to the rear of its property.

1941-43 Missionary, Wm. Schweppe, on furlough from Nigeria served Atmore.

1944-45 Rev. Paul E. Krause filled the vacancy left by Rev. Schweppe.

1946-48 Rev. Wm. Jones served Ebenezer. A mission was started in Freemanville.

1948 Mr. George Wyatt served Ebenezer.

1949-50 Rev. Wm. G. Kennell served Ebenezer.

1951 Rev. Harry Buls served Ebenezer.

1952 Candidate Floyd McAdoo served Ebenezer.

1953 Rev. Rupert Eggert served Ebenezer.

1954-1967 Rev. W. J. Tervalon became Ebenezer's third residential pastor.

Freemanville Mission was closed and the members transferred to Ebenezer.

1964 Present building was erected and dedicated.

1967 Rev. Tervalon retired.

1967-69 Rev. Herbert B. Wehmeier served Ebenezer.

1969 Rev. Moses J. Clark accepted a call to Ebenezer and was installed, Dec. 7, 1969.

1971 Purchased Air Conditioner, painted building.

1975 As of September, baptized souls 232, communicants 108, Day School enrollment 77.

A brief history of Zoar

In order to get a complete view of its history it is necessary first to mention St. Titus.. In 1945 St. Peter's Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod) merged with St. Thomas and vacated its church buildings. The Church Extension Board of the Missouri Synod granted St. Philip's the use of the property, including a chapel, parsonage, and school building, for starting another Negro mission under the direction of Pastor R. Polatz. In 1945 St. Titus was thus organized. Within five years this congregation had grown to over 170 communicant members, 60 pupils in Sunday School, and 80 children in day school, and it had also become self-supporting.

In January, 1952, St. Titus was closed by the Mission Board. The members were told to seek membership in St. Philip's or Berea. Only two families followed this advice and joined these churches. Others just drifted away. However, from 30 to 35 members lived and prayed in the expectation that God would reunite St. Titus Lutheran Church. These kept in weekly contact with each other for mutual encouragement.

It was through conversation of an Aid Association for Lutherans representative with Pastor W. Valleskey of the Wisconsin Synod that help came to us. He met with the remainig group in the last part of February or first part of March in 1952. After hearing our case, a letter was sent to the Mission Board of the Michigan District of the Wisconsin Synod, stating: "We, a group of Christians living in the Chene and Pierce Sts. area of Detroit, Mich., herewith xtend a plea to you to come and help us. We have no pastor or church home at this time. We beg of you to send us a minister, who shall preach the Gospel to and administer the Sacraments among us in accordance with pure Scriptures. Should you desire a meeting with us, you may contact Pastor Valleskey, who has met with us and personally heard our plea."

A meeting with the Mission Board was arranged in the home of one of the "interested" persons. Before the meeting ended we were told that divine services could be started as soon as we could find a place in which to worship.

Two weeks later, in the afternoon of March 16, 1952, some 40 persons gathered for worship at 3448 Chene, just across the street from old St. Titus. Pastor Valleskey, who was our leader in getting started, continued to lead us as temporary pastor. Thus this remnant of St. Titus through the inspiring message of God's Word formed what later came to be known as Zoar Evangelical Lutheran Church (Zoar, not only "little" to us, but also "City of Refuge"). Pastor Valleskey served us until the end of September, when Pastor L. Raasch was asked to be our temporary pastor.

In 1945 Rev. P.C. Dumas accepted the call to be our pastor, beginning his work in May. From the start we were renting space from a Baptist group. After six months troubles developed and we could no longer use this place of worship. We found quarters in a Recreation Settlement and remained there until Nov. 20, 1955, when we moved into our present Parsonage-Chapel, six miles north of the old sites. As a result of this move we lost most of our Sunday School children. By April 1, 1957, when Rev. Dumas accepted a call from the Michigan District of the Missouri Synod, many of our communicant members had left. The figure had dropped from 45 to 18 by January, 1957.

Again we turned to pastors Valleskey and Raasch for help. They, with the permission of the Mission Board, asked Mr. Grigsby, who was on leave from his service in the Missouri Synod, to assist in the preaching services during the vacancy. After many months of calling, Mr. Henry Grigsby consented to re-enter the full time pastorate at Zoar. He was installed on Dec. 2, 1956. Membership at that time numbered 18 communicants and 22 baptized children.

At present there are 65 communicant members, 115 souls, 10 members in the Ladies' Aid Society, 136 pupils in the Sunday School, and 14 voting members.

This, in brief, is the history of Zoar, as told by one who personally witnessed her "ups and downs". You may have noted that nothing was said about the "Why" of St. Titus being closed. It was omitted because no definite reason has ever been given that we know of.

SILOAH LUTHERAN

DECLARING THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL
TO AN EVERCHANGING WORLD

CHURCH FILLED FOR INSTALLATION



"That was the most inspiring service I ever attended."

That was the comment heard after Pastor Grigsby's installation service on March 6th. And it probably was heard more than once. There were a number of reasons for it.

First, the church was full. Since there was no offering, the elders did not get an accurate count of the number who attended. But Siloah holds about 750 if every seat is filled. The downstairs was full and the balcony was about half full. So there were probably about 600 persons in church.

TREASURY EXHAUSTED IN FEBRUARY

At the end of February there was no money left to pay Siloah's bills. In order to pay those bills, our treasurer had to wait for the first offering in March. As a result, the treasury ended the month with a deficit balance. This is the first time in many years that this has happened.

Nearly everybody knows that deficits are not unusual at Siloah. But this deficit is different. In the past it has always been possible to borrow from other funds to pay the bills. Since 1971 Siloah has done about \$75,000 worth of that borrowing. But this time there was nothing left to

A large number of Siloah's own members turned out for the service, probably more than we have in both services on a Sunday morning. In addition there were several hundred visitors attending the service, including about 30 pastors and their wives. And all

Continued on Page 2

THANK YOU, SILOAH

Mrs. Grigsby and I want to thank everyone who donated food, time and effort to make it so pleasant for us in our new home. Thanks!

Pastor Henry Grigsby

borrow. All available funds were used up and there was still a shortage of \$1800.

However, those who understood the budget for this year were not surprised. It was reported in last month's *Siloah Lutheran* that the 1977 budget required the spending of \$15,000 more than we could expect to receive. On a monthly basis we are spending \$1250 more than we take in. Thus it is not surprising that we were \$1800 short in February. It could have been \$2500.

At present we have no choice but to borrow from outside the congrega-

Continued on Page 4



VOLUME 47 - March 1977 - NO. 3

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR HOLY WEEK

April 3 - PALM SUNDAY

Confirmation in the 10:30 service
(Communion at 8 a.m. only)

April 7 - MAUNDY THURSDAY

Communion Service at 7 p.m.
(Common cup)

April 8 - GOOD FRIDAY

Service of meditation at 1 p.m.
followed by Holy Communion
(individual cups)

April 8 - GOOD FRIDAY

Tenebrae (darkness) service at 7 p.m.

April 10 - EASTER SUNDAY

6 a.m. - Sunrise Service
7 a.m. - Easter Breakfast
8 a.m. - Early Service
10 a.m. - Sunday School Program
10:30 a.m. - Late Service

MISS KRAUSE TO REMAIN WITH SILOAH

We are happy to report that Miss Krause has returned the Call she received from St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Sodus, Michigan. We are grateful to God that He has directed her to remain with us and we ask that He would continue to bless her ministry among us.

Miss Deborah Dittmar, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Dittmar, Jr., has accepted her Call to teach at St. Peter's Lutheran School in Helenville, Wisconsin. We expect that the Dittmars are pleased to have their daughter so much closer to home. Miss Dittmar is presently teaching in Kawkawlin, Michigan.

AFTER THE INSTALLATION



After the installation service, Pastor and Mrs. Grigsby stood in front of the pulpit to meet the congregation and others who had come to wish them well. Among the first to greet them were councilmen Jerome Geeck, George Roginske, and Jerry Abts.



Among the last to be served were Pastor and Mrs. Grigsby and their daughter Doris. In order to attend the installation, Doris had travelled from Detroit along with the foster child that Mrs. Grigsby had been caring for. Fifty long-stemmed red roses decorated the head table, because as the donor put it, roses were more appropriate than carnations. We hope that Pastor Grigsby's daughters will soon become known and feel at home when they visit Milwaukee.

TROJANS WIN TROPHY?

After losing every game in the regular season, Siloah's grade school basketball team finished the season with four straight victories in the league tournament. It was a fine climax for the team and their coaches, Jim Parker and Henry Coleman, who worked so hard to put a winning team together. We hope these young people remember their experience when they feel like giving up on something later on in life.

THE SILOAH LUTHERAN
is the monthly publication of
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R. F. Westendorf - 871-4188
Henry W. Grigsby - 444-9472
School phone - 873-8240
Principal - Mr. Ronald Buelow



Among the first to be served were the clergymen who assisted with the installation. Shown here, left to right, are Pastor Howard Kaiser, chairman of the Southeast Wisconsin District Mission Board; Pastor Norman Berg, who preached the installation sermon; and President Oscar J. Naumann of the Wisconsin Synod. Others who assisted with the installation included Pastor Winfred Nommensen, first vice-president of the Southeastern Wisconsin District; Pastor Robert Voss from the Commission on Higher Education, Pastor Arthur Koepsell from Zebaoth, Pastor Richard Seeger from St. Marcus, and Pastor Kurt Mahnke from St. Philip's. Pastor Erhard Pankow was not able to participate because of the 50th anniversary celebration at Garden Homes. The man with his back to the camera is Prof. Gerald Hoenecke from the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in Mequon.

PAPER DRIVE COMING

Plans are being made for a paper drive in the near future. Watch the Sunday bulletin for details.

PREACHER BORROWS INSTALLATION SERMON

In the introduction to the installation sermon, Pastor Norman Berg, executive secretary for the General Board for Home Missions, announced that his text and sermon were "borrowed" from a sermon that Pastor Grigsby had preached years ago at a pastoral conference in Michigan. The text was taken from Revelation 3:20, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." Since much of Pastor Grigsby's work will involve making home visits, Pastor Berg applied that text to Pastor Grigsby's work as Pastor Grigsby had earlier applied it to the pastors in Michigan. First Pastor Berg noted that Pastor Grigsby's knock would not always be welcomed by the people he would visit. Then he encouraged the members of Siloah to receive their new pastor as God's own representative in their midst.

\$3600 FOR GAS?

The shortage of natural gas was big news during the past winter. It also made big news with Siloah's treasurer. The gas bills for December, January and February totalled \$3651. The February gas bill which paid the heating costs during January's extremely cold weather was \$1456. This covered the gas used to heat the church, the school and the two parsonages. The trustees have done what they could to conserve fuel. Turning down the thermostat even further meant risking serious damage to the building.

God gives us our weather; but He not only rules the weather, He also rules the hearts of those who look to Him for health and salvation. May He move those hearts to increase their offerings to meet the increased needs of His church.

CHURCH FILLED - Cont. from Pg. 1

this in spite of a very popular concert by the Lutheran Chorale which was taking place at Mt. Lebanon at the same time.

The Children's Choir and the Senior Choir participated in the service along with the children from grades one, two and three from the Christian day school. The council members turned out in force to pledge Siloah's support of the new pastor. And with 600 voices to accompany, Siloah's majestic organ poured out harmonies that inspired the kind of singing that has not been heard in our church for a long time.

After greeting Pastor and Mrs. Grigsby in front of the pulpit, the worshipers went to the church basement where the ladies had prepared a light lunch. Approximately 400 people were served. But the food was not the only attraction. The school children had individually designed and made hundreds of place mats and dozens of artificial flowers. Large posters above the stage greeted Pastor Grigsby in the name of Jesus.

It would have been hard to find one person who was not totally pleased with the service. Yet the most inspiring moment of the service was not a matter of large crowds or thrilling music. It was the simple promise of a servant of God, who declared that with God's help he would be faithful to the duties of his office, and the simple promise of this congregation to support him in his work.

May God bless those promises as He blessed the entire worship service.